

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 RSR-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09

H-02 INR-09 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01

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R 221550 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7129

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PGOV CY

SUBJECT: CYPRUS: GOVT SPOKESMAN TALKS OF SETTING UP NEW SYNOD

OTHER SUBJECTS

REF: ATHENS 1 656; ISTANBUL 454

BEGIN SUMMARY: PIO OUTLINES MEASURES ARCHBISHOP MAY TAKE UNLESS BISHOPS ABANDON DECISION TO DEFROCK HIM. EOKA DAY MILITARY PARADE WILL NOT TAKE PLACE BECAUSE OF TENSION ON ISLAND. DISMISSED POLICE SAY THEY WILL APPEAL TO SUPREME COURT. END SUMMARY

1. IN MARCH 21 POLICY STATEMENT, GOVT SPOKESMAN FOR FIRST TIME MADE IT EXPLICIT THAT ARCHBISHOP INTENDS MOVE AGAINST CYPRUS BISHOPS UNLESS THEY ABANDON THEIR EFFORTS TO DEFROCK HIM. PIO SAID BISHOPS WOULD BE FORGIVEN IF THEY REPENTED. HOWEVER, IF THEY DID NOT, ARCHBISHOP WOULD TAKE MEASURES AGAINST THEM, INCLUDING " CREATION
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OF A REGULAR (CANONICOS) HOLY SYNOD TO REGULATE THE SMOOTH FUNCTIONING OF THE CHURCH OF CYPRUS." SPOKESMAN ADDED THAT MAKARIOS DOES NOT PLAN TAKE ANY ACTION BEFORE EXPIRATION OF 30- DAY DEADLINE SET BY BISHOPS.

2. COMMENT: WITH ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH AND GREEK HOLY SYNOD COMPLETING CIRCLE OF ORTHODOX PRELATES WHO REFUSE TO RECOGNIZE VALIDITY OF DEFROCKING DECISION (REFTELS), CYPRUS BISHOPS ARE COMPLETELY ISOLATED. PIO STATEMENT SEEMS DESIGNED TO LEAVE OPEN POSSIBILITY OF REMOVING ALL THREE BISHOPS, AND CONSTITUTING ENTIRELY NEW SYNOD, IF THEY PERSIST IN THEIR DECISION. INCIDENTALLY, GREEK EMB SOURCE TELLS US THAT AMB LAGACOS CAME AWAY FROM MARCH 20 AUDIENCE WITH MAKARIOS WITH CLEAR IMPRESSION THAT ARCHBISHOP WILL TAKE ACTION AGAINST BISHOPS -- BUT NOT BEFORE GREEK EASTER (APRIL 29). END COMMENT

3. 32 PRO- GRICAS POLICEMEN WHO WERE DISMISSED MARCH 15 AFTER COUNCIL OF MINISTERS DECIDED THEIR RETENTION ON FORCE WAS NOT " IN PUBLIC INTEREST" (NICOSIA 556) HELD PRESS CONFERENCE MARCH 21. THEY SAID THEY WILL APPEAL MINISTERS' DECISION TO SUPREME COURT, ADDING THAT THEY WERE NOT INVOLVED IN ACTS OF VIOLENCE OR LAWLESSNESS.

4. GOVT ANNOUNCED MARCH 21 THAT TRADITIONAL APRIL 1 EOKA DAY PARADE WILL NOT TAKE PLACE " BECAUSE OF ABNORMAL SITUATION ON ISLAND." COMMENT: DECISION TO CALL OFF PARADE MUST HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT FOR MAKARIOS, BOTH BECAUSE OF PATRIOTIC NATURE OF OCCASION AND BECAUSE OF HIS NATURAL DESIRE TO APPEAR IN CONTROL OF SITUATION. IT IS POSSIBLE GOVT BELIEVES GRIVAS FORCES ARE PLANNING EOKA DAY SPECTACULAR, AS RIGHTIST PRESS HAS RECENTLY PRINTED.

GRANT

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*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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